

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

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DISTRICT OF VERMONT

Federal Building

RICHARD PAUL WASKO
CLERK

BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05402-0945

" P.O. BOX 945
BURLINGTON 05402-0945
(802) 951-6301

" P.O. BOX 998
BRATTLEBORO 05302-0998
(802) 254-0250

" P.O. BOX 607
RUTLAND 05702-0607
(802) 773-0245

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**NOTICE TO LITIGANTS AND MEMBERS OF
THE BAR REGARDING PRIVACY EXPECTATIONS**

The Judicial Conference of the United States Courts, the principal policy making body for the federal court system, recently adopted various policies governing the electronic availability of official case file information. The Conference reaffirmed its earlier policy that non-sealed, public court documents should continue to be made available electronically to the general public, however, with two major exceptions:

social security and criminal case documents should be excluded from public access as the information contained by these types of records generally contain "personal data identifiers" such as Social Security numbers, dates of birth, financial account numbers, and possibly the names of minor children.

Please be advised that the district Clerk's Office has electronic screening measures in place which preclude Internet access to these types of documents by the general public. *Counsel and litigants are also advised, however, that the official policy of the Judicial Conference is that the disclosure of personal information which has the potential for negative impact upon a party or litigant continues to be the primary responsibility of the attorneys or litigants involved with the lawsuit.* You should use discretion, therefore, in determining whether sensitive personal information is to be included in any documents filed in civil cases.

Richard Paul Wasko
Clerk of Court